THE ETERNALS



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Strange events have exposed a startling fact, kept alive through the centuries only by myth and superstition — man is not alone on the evolutionary chain! He has shared the planet with two species unknown to him! Now, in a sudden burst of violence, the Deviants have risen from their domain beneath the sea to challenge all humanity! But mankind has unexpected allies —

STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE ETERNALS!™

THE ROSY-FINGERED DAWN SPREADS ACROSS THE ACROPOLIS OF ATHENS WITH A GLOW THAT REMOVES ALL SOLIDITY.

BUT IT DOES NOT REMOVE THE CHILL FROM HER SKIN-- AND THE WEIGHT SHE BEARS RESTS HEAVILY ON HER.

SHE IS **THENA THE ETERNAL**-- AND IS FAR OLDER THAN THESE CRUMBLING MONUMENTS OF MAN.

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THIS MORNING HER GOLDEN ARMOR CHAFED AGAINST HER SKIN-- AND THE DIGNITY OF THE **RULERSHIP OF ALL EARTH'S ETERNALS** SAT UNCOMFORTABLY AS WELL. THIS MORNING ALL SHE CAN FEEL IS A TIGHTNESS IN HER BREAST NAMED **MISERY.**

I'VE LOST A FATHER--ONE WHO WAS IMMORTAL AND INDESTRUCTIBLE AND I SHOULD NEVER HAVE HAD TO LOSE. BUT ZURAS IS DEAD, AND I'M ALONE.

I'VE LOST A FRIEND--ONE WHO WAS PROBABLY RIGHT TO QUARREL WITH ME, WHO WAS PROBABLY RIGHT ABOUT THE DEVIANT THREAT TO US ETERNALS AND OUR BROTHER HUMANS--AND ONE WHOM I SHOULD GO TO AND APOLOGIZE. BUT IKARIS IS GONE OFF TO HIS WAR, AND I'M ALONE.

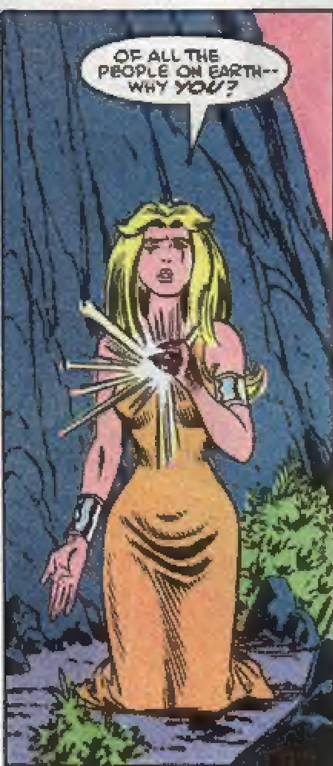
AND I'VE LOST MY HEART--TO THE LEADER OF THOSE VERY DEVIANTS, TO A CREATURE WHO WOULD BETRAY ME WITHOUT A THOUGHT--AND HAS, IN THE PAST. I SHOULD FORGET ABOUT HIM, EXCEPT TO WAGE WAR AGAINST HIM. BUT I'M TOO WEAK TO DO THE RIGHT THING--AND I'M ALONE.








AND THE ONLY THING THAT MAKES ME FEEL AT ALL ALIVE--
--IS THE TOUCH OF A SPIRIT--A TOUCH THROUGH THIS SMALL CRYSTAL OF CONTACT.
THE TOUCH OF AN ENEMY. OF A--

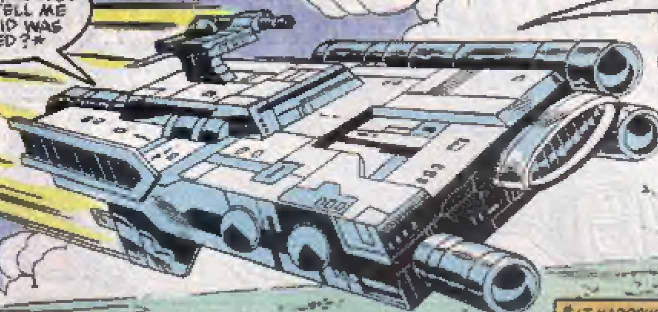
CURSE YOU, KRO!
CURSE YOU!

OF ALL THE PEOPLE ON EARTH-- WHY YOU?

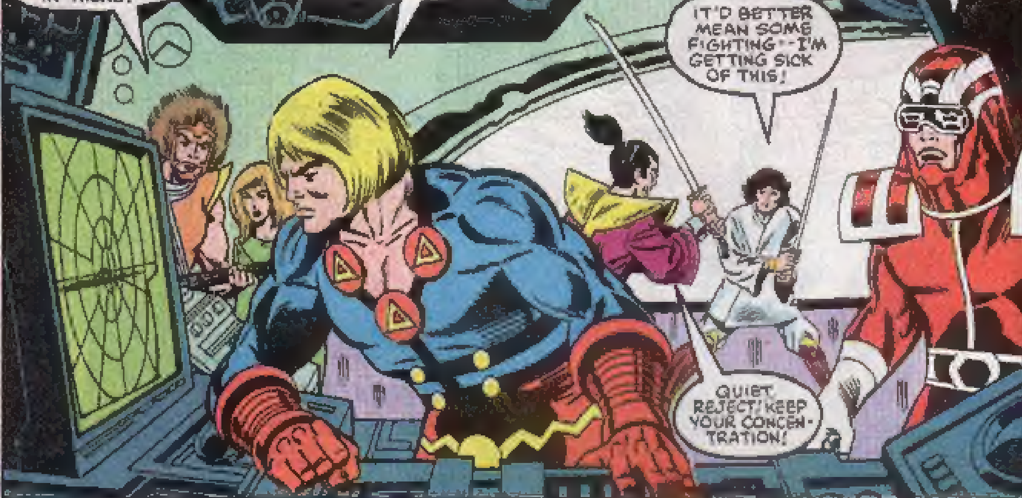
--AND WHY ME--?


MAGNIFICENT OBSESSION!

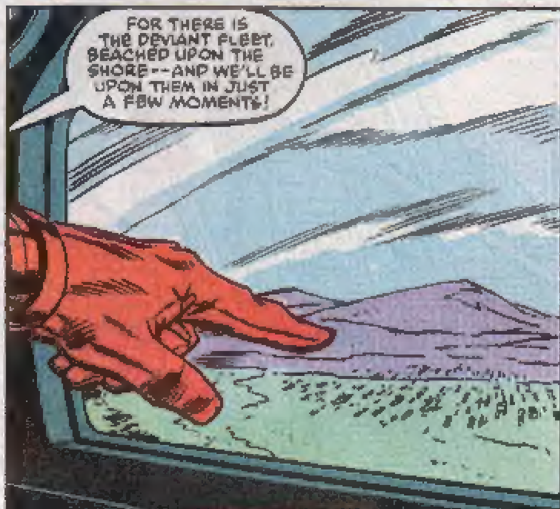
Stan Lee presents
PETER B. GILLIS STORY
SAL BUSCEMA ART
RICK PARKER LETTERS
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I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND, IKARIS? DIDN'T YOU TELL ME THE PYRAMID WAS DESTROYED?*
IT WAS, MARGO-- BUT THE STOREHOUSES BELOW WERE CONSTRUCTED BY OUR MASTER ENGINEER PHASTOS TO WITHSTAND ANY CATASTROPHE--EVEN AN ATTACK BY A CELESTIAL! THERE WERE SECRETS HIDDEN WITHIN THAT MUST NEVER BE ALLOWED LOOSE IN THE WORLD AGAIN!
*IT HAPPENED IN ETERNALS (OLD SERIES) #19 • MAC-KAR.


YOU'RE ONLY SUCCEEDING IN TERRIFYING YOUR GIRLFRIEND, IKARIS-- STOP HINTING AND TELL US WHAT'S IN THERE!
I WISH I KNEW KHORYPHOS-- BUT MY UNCLE VALKIN NEVER CONFIDED IN ME! ONLY HE AND ZURAS SHARED THE SECRETS OF THE VAULTS!
AND ZURAS IS DEAD AND VALKIN IS OUT IN SPACE, FUSED INTO THE UNI-MIND WITH MUCH OF THE REST OF OUR RACE! GREAT! WHAT DO WE DO?
IT'D BETTER MEAN SOME FIGHTING--I'M GETTING SICK OF THIS!
QUIET, REJECT! KEEP YOUR CONCENTRATION!


YOU MAY HAVE YOUR WISH, MY BLOODTHIRSTY LITTLE DEVIANT TURNCOAT-- WE MAY ALL OF US HAVE MORE FIGHTING THAN WE WISH FOR!


FOR THERE IS THE DEVIANT FLEET, BEACHED UPON THE SHORE--AND WE'LL BE UPON THEM IN JUST A FEW MOMENTS!


AND ON THAT SHORE...
SO THIS VIAL IS WHAT THIS IMMENSE ARMADA WAS SENT BY THE PRIESTS TO RETRIEVE! IT'S A SMALL TROPHY, BUT I ACCEPT IT HUMBLY AS MY RE-WARD FOR A JOB WELL DONE!


I BEG YOU, MY LORD KRO-- PLEASE GIVE IT TO THEM! DO NOT DEFY THEM IN THIS!
'DEFY' THEM, LUGNER? IS IT POSSI-BLE FOR THE RULER OF ALL EARTH'S DEVIANTS TO BE GIVEN ORDERS BY ANYONE THAT HE CAN 'DEFY'?


I KNOW YOU, LUGNER! YOU AND YOUR CRONIES, SENT ALONG ON THIS MISSION TO SPY-- AND TO SNATCH THE TREASURE FROM UNDER MY NOSE SO THE PRIESTLORD GHAUR COULD ADVANCE HIS HIDDEN PLANS!
YOU'VE FOOLED NO ONE-- LEAST OF ALL ME!
PLEASE, MY LORD-- IT'S FOR YOUR OWN GOOD--!


I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE JUDGE OF MY OWN GOOD, LUGNER.
AND AS I AM A LOYAL SON OF THE CHURCH, I SHALL PRESENT GHAUR WITH HIS TREASURE WITH ALL HUMILITY--AFTER I AM DONE WITH IT.


NOW GO, LUGNER, AND REMEMBER THIS...NEVER TRY TO PLAY THE GAME UNLESS YOU KNOW ALL THE RULES!


THE BUSINESS OF SALVATION IS NO GAME, BROTHER KRO.
SO! WE HAD A FULL-FLEDGED PRIEST STOWED AWAY WITH US ALL THIS TIME! WHAT UNCOMMON COURAGE!
AND SINCE WHEN HAVE DEVIANTS EVER ENTERTAINED HOPE OF SALVATION?

HOPE *IS* FOREIGN TO US, KRO-- BUT WE ARE SIMPLY IN THE PROCESS OF *ACHIEVING* SALVATION.
GIVE ME THE VIAL.

WHAT UTTER *HOGWASH!* YOU PRIESTS REALLY ARE MORONS! *SALVATION!*

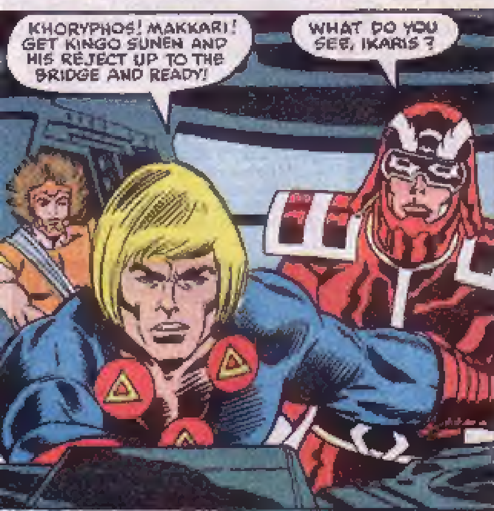
I WILL NOT ALLOW *BLASPHEMY* TO BE SPOKEN IN MY PRESENCE! *GIVE ME THE VIAL!*
TAKE IT, IF YOU HAVE THE AUDACITY, PRIEST! LET US SEE IF THE PRIESTS' CHALLENGE TO MY RULERSHIP HAS ANY SUBSTANCE!

THERE ARE MORE GAMES BEING PLAYED HERE THAN YOU REALIZE, PRIEST--AND THE ONE YOU'RE BEING SUCKED INTO WOULD BE AN EASY ONE TO LOSE!
AND WHO IS THIS? WHY DO YOU MOCK THE ROBES OF A PRIEST BY YOUR DRESS? YOU ARE NOT ONE OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

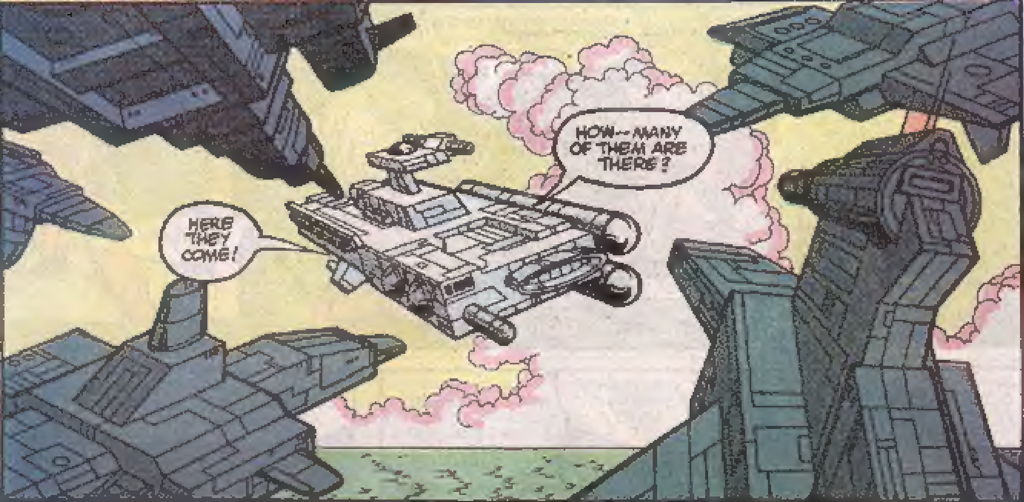

HE IS NO PRIEST--BUT ALTHOUGH HE HAS ACCOMPANIED ME, I'M AS EAGER TO FIND OUT WHAT HE'S ABOUT AS YOU ARE!
YOU HAVE NO NAME FOR ME, PRIEST--NOR DO YOU, BROTHER KRO. AND WHAT I AM ABOUT IS MY OWN CONCERN.


BUT I AM HERE TO SEE THAT THE COMING DRAMA PROCEEDS AS IT SHOULD--AND I AM DANGEROUS WHEN MY JUDGEMENT IS CHALLENGED!
WHOEVER YOU ARE, I AM NOT SO EASILY--

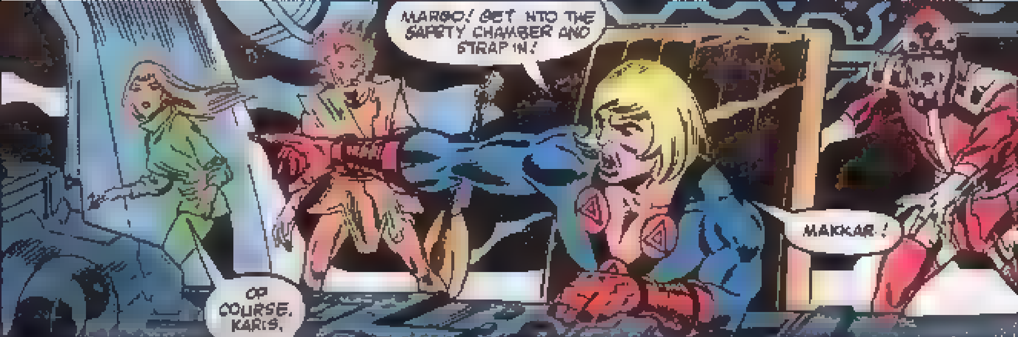

BROTHER KRO! THEY'RE HERE! THEY CAME IN WITH-OUT ANY SENSORS PICKING THEM UP! GIVE THE ORDER FOR BATTLE!
THE ETERNALS HAVE COME!


KHORYPHOS! MAKKARI! GET KINGO SUNEN AND HIS REJECT UP TO THE BRIDGE AND READY!
WHAT DO YOU SEE, IKARIS?

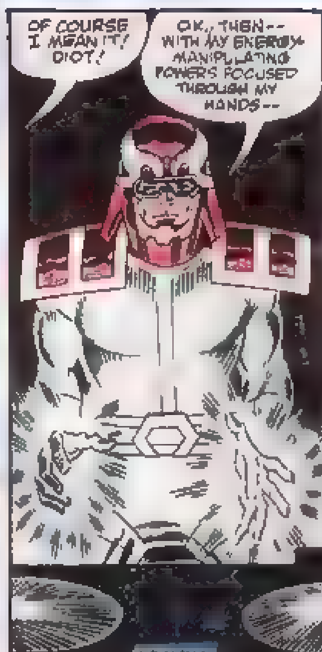

I SEE THAT ALL THE DEVIANT FLEET IS NOT LYING ON THE BEACH! THERE'S SOMETHING VERY BIG STILL UNDERWATER--AND IT'S HEADED FOR US!

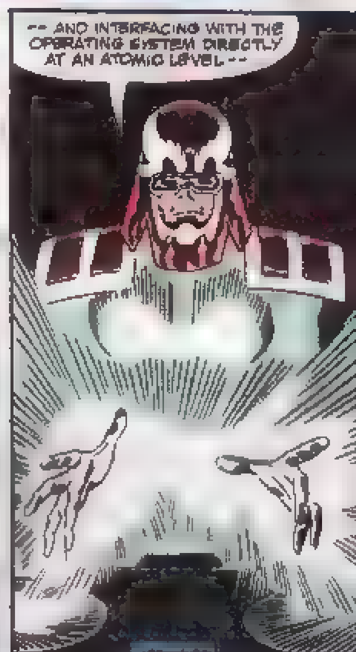

HERE THEY COME!
HOW-- MANY OF THEM ARE THERE?

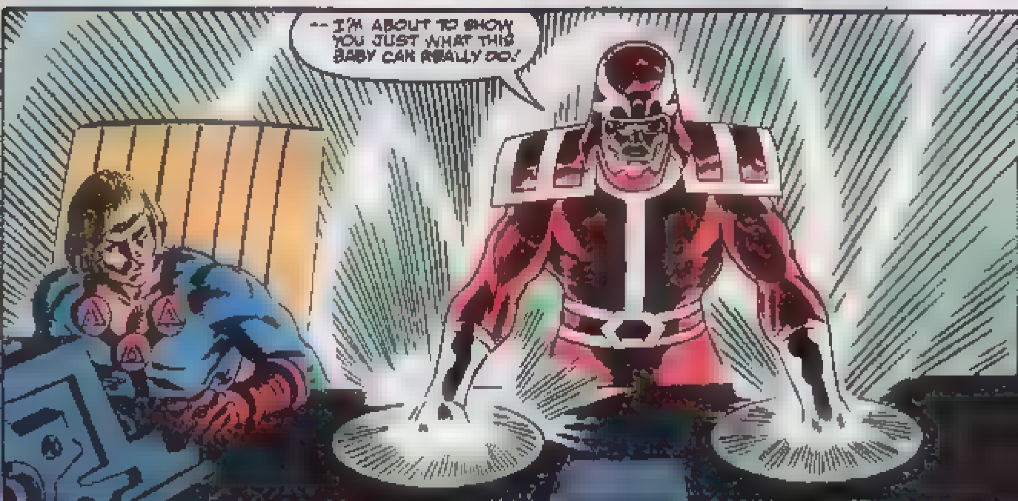
I DON'T THINK IKARUS CAN COUNT THAT HIGH, KHORYPHOS--!

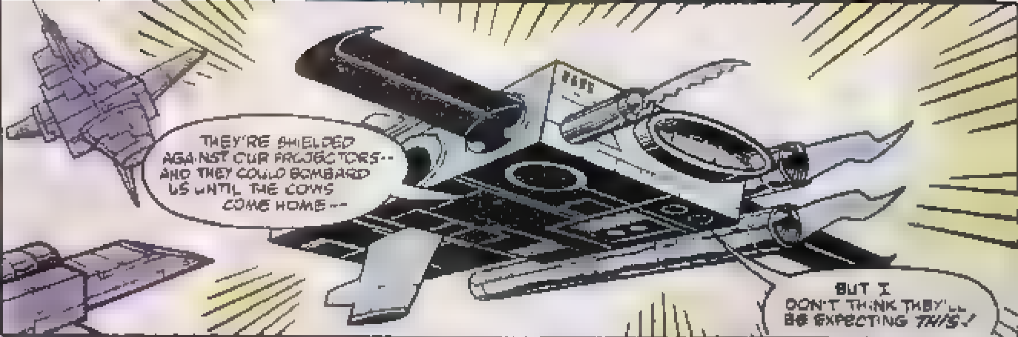

MARGO! GET INTO THE SAFETY CHAMBER AND STRAP IN!
OF COURSE, KARIS.
MAKKAR!

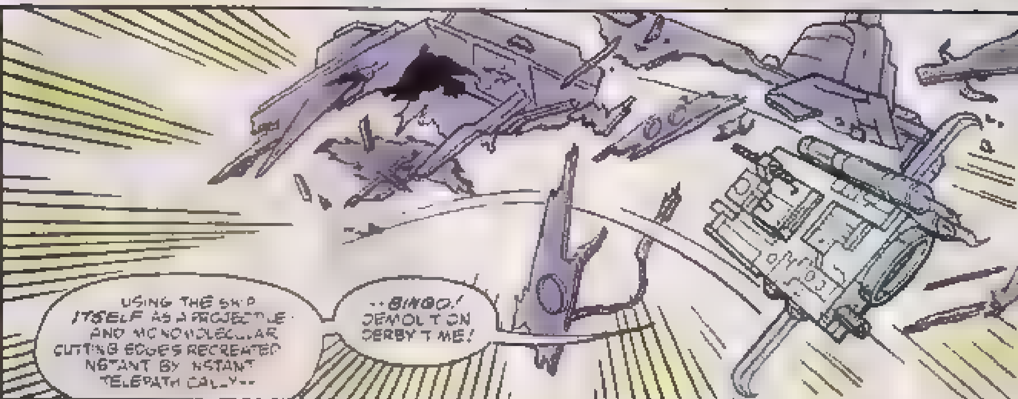

WITH ALL THIS POWER THEY COULD THWART US-- EVEN DESTROY US! BUT THEY'LL BE UNCOORDINATED-- SLOPPY!
WE NEED UTMOST SPEED AND MANEUVERABILITY! YOU DESIGNED THE SHIP-- TAKE THE CONTROLS!
YOU MEAN IT?


OF COURSE I MEAN IT! IDIOT!
OK., THEN-- WITH MY ENERGY-MANIPULATING POWERS FOCUSED THROUGH MY HANDS--


-- AND INTERFACING WITH THE OPERATING SYSTEM DIRECTLY AT AN ATOMIC LEVEL--

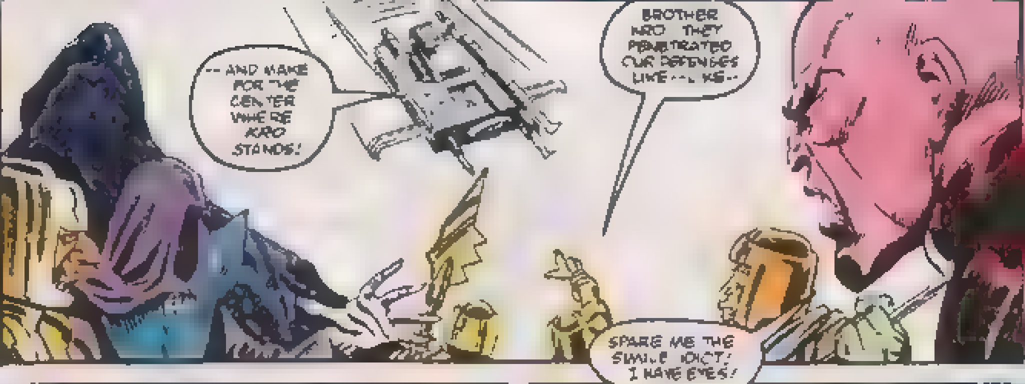

-- I'M ABOUT TO SHOW YOU JUST WHAT THIS BABY CAN REALLY DO!

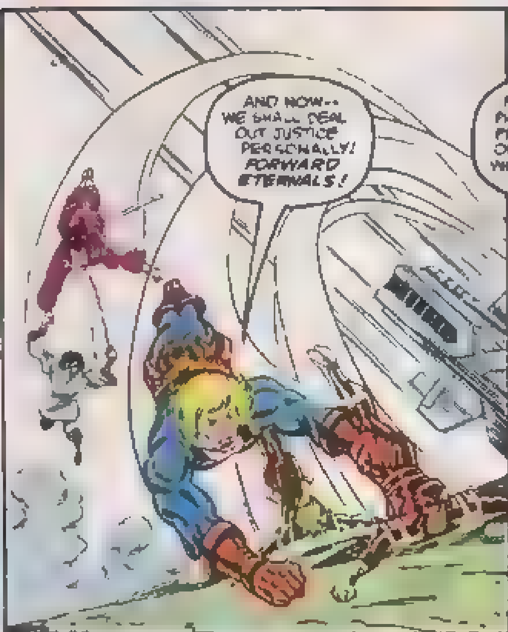

THEY'RE SHIELDED AGAINST OUR PROJECTORS-- AND THEY COULD BOMBARD US UNTIL THE COWS COME HOME--
BUT I DON'T THINK THEY'LL BE EXPECTING *THIS!*


USING THE SHIP *ITSELF* AS A PROJECTILE-- AND MONOMOLECULAR CUTTING EDGES RECREATED INSTANT BY INSTANT TELEPATHICALLY--
--*BINGO!* DEMOLITION DERBY TIME!

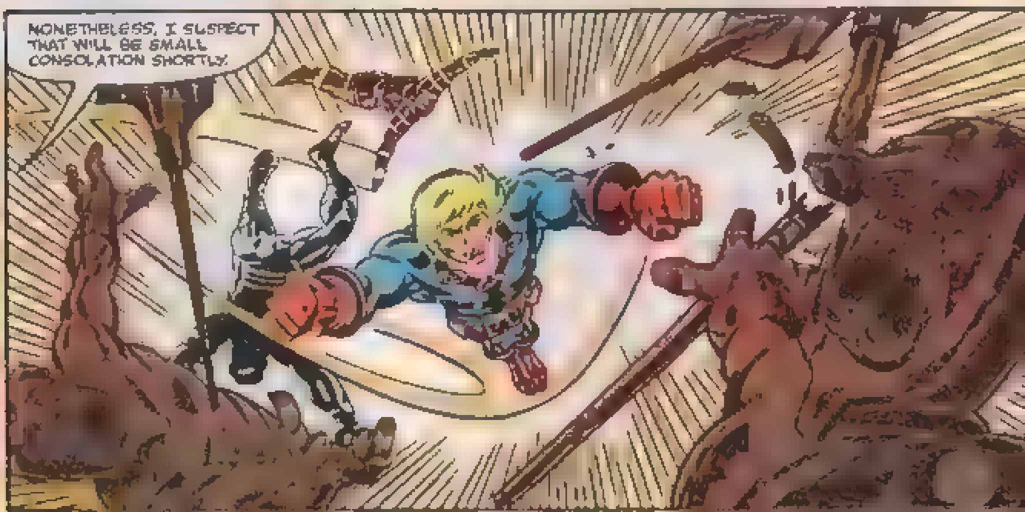

YEEE-HA!

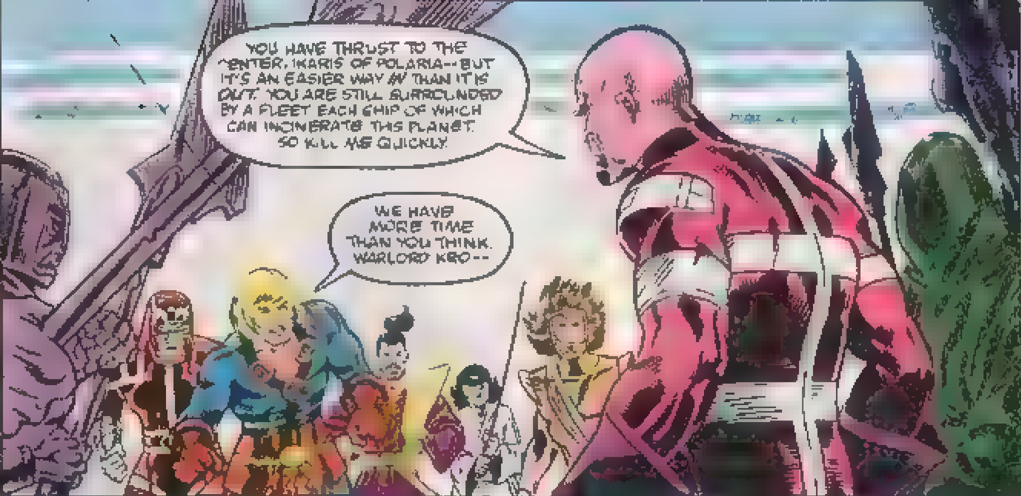
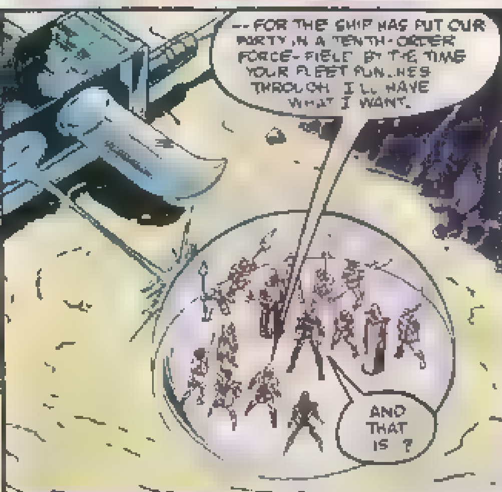
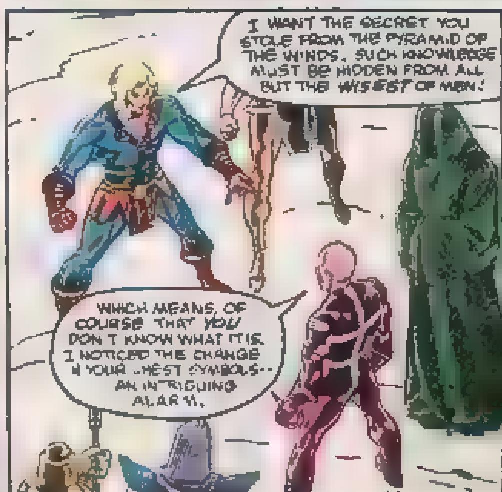
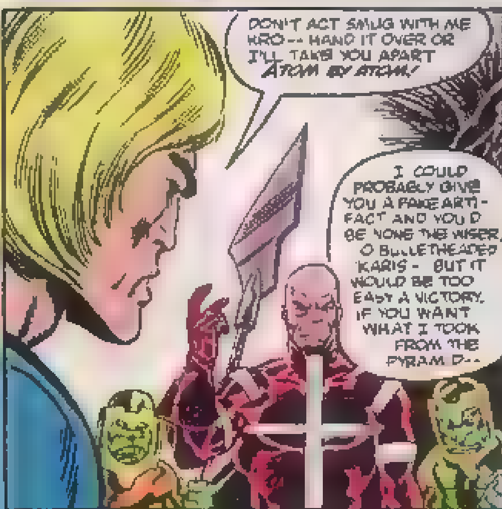
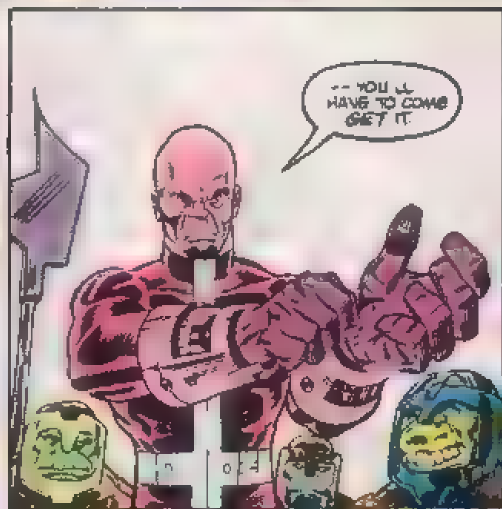

JUST LIKE WHEN I WAS THE *EMPEROR DARIUS'S* PERSONAL CHARIOTEER! I LOVE IT!
THAT'S ENOUGH, MAKKARI! WE DON'T HAVE TIME. MAKE A LINE FOR THE CENTER OF THE FLEET--

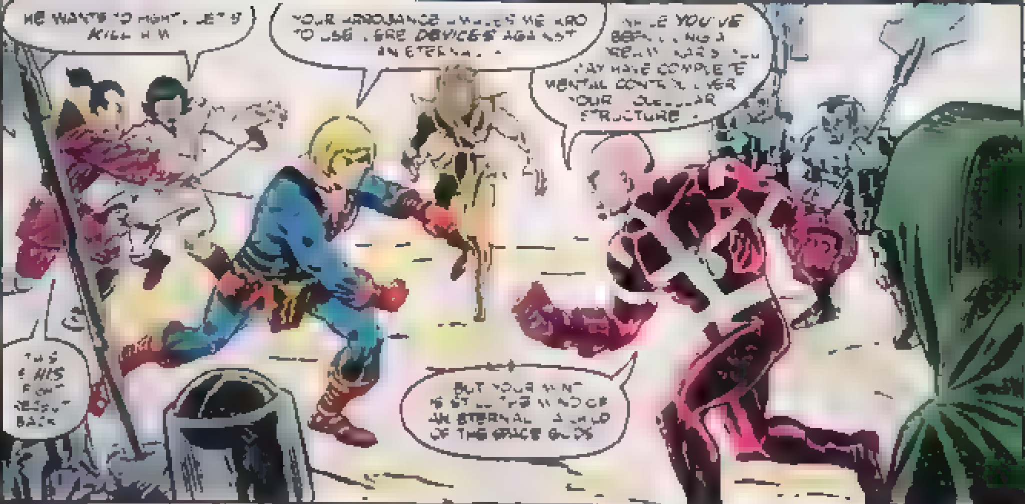

-- AND MAKE FOR THE CENTER WHERE KRO STANDS!
BROTHER KRO, THEY PENETRATED OUR DEFENSES LIKE -- LIKE --
SPARE ME THE SIMILE, IDIOT! I HAVE EYES!


AND NOW -- WE SHALL DEAL OUT JUSTICE PERSONALLY! FORWARD, ETERNALS!

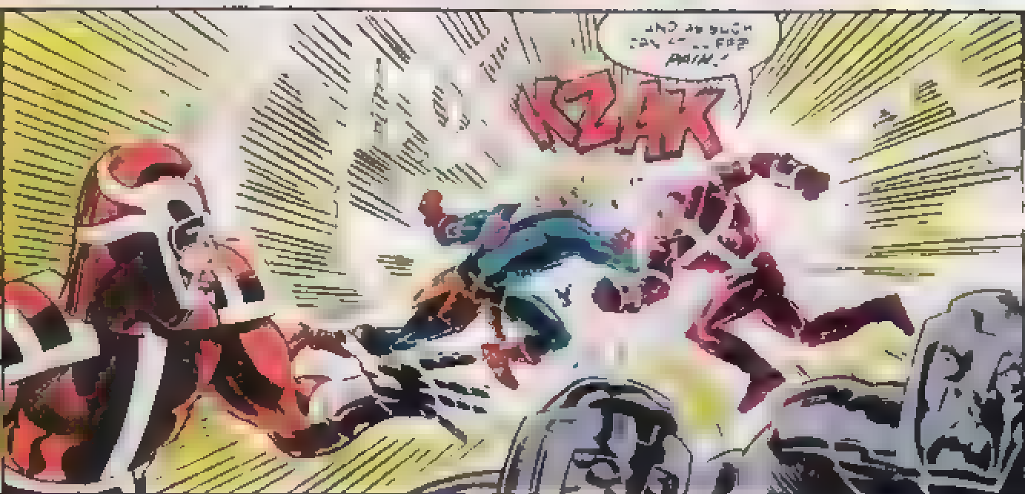

FORM A PHALANX! PROTECT OUR KING WITH YOUR LIVES!
YOU SEE, KRO? THE OFFICE STILL COMMANDS ITS PROPER RESPECT.


NONETHELESS, I SUSPECT THAT WILL BE SMALL CONSOLATION SHORTLY.

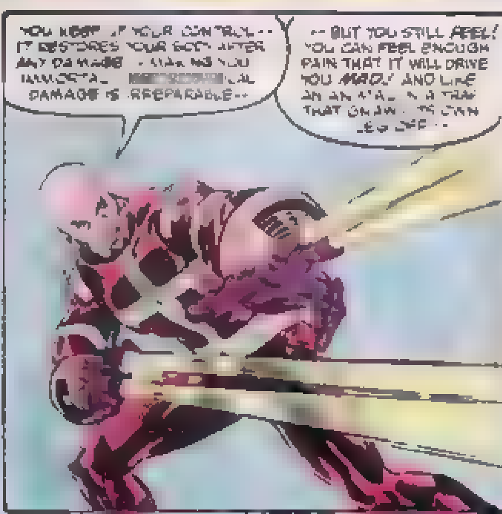

YOU HAVE THRUST TO THE CENTER, IKARIS OF POLARIA--BUT IT'S AN EASIER WAY IN THAN IT IS OUT. YOU ARE STILL SURROUNDED BY A FLEET EACH SHIP OF WHICH CAN INCINERATE THIS PLANET. SO KILL ME QUICKLY.
WE HAVE MORE TIME THAN YOU THINK, WARLORD KRO--

--FOR THE SHIP HAS PUT OUR PARTY IN A TENTH-ORDER FORCE-FIELD. BY THE TIME YOUR FLEET PUNCHES THROUGH, I'LL HAVE WHAT I WANT.
AND THAT IS ?

I WANT THE SECRET YOU STOLE FROM THE PYRAMID OF THE WINDS. SUCH KNOWLEDGE MUST BE HIDDEN FROM ALL BUT THE WISEST OF MEN!
WHICH MEANS, OF COURSE THAT YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS. I NOTICED THE CHANGE IN YOUR CHEST SYMBOLS--AN INTRIGUING ALARM.

DON'T ACT SMUG WITH ME KRO--HAND IT OVER OR I'LL TAKE YOU APART ATOM BY ATOM!
I COULD PROBABLY GIVE YOU A FAKE ARTI-FACT AND YOU'D BE NONE THE WISER, O BULLETHEADED IKARIS-- BUT IT WOULD BE TOO EASY A VICTORY. IF YOU WANT WHAT I TOOK FROM THE PYRAMID--

--YOU'LL HAVE TO COME GET IT.



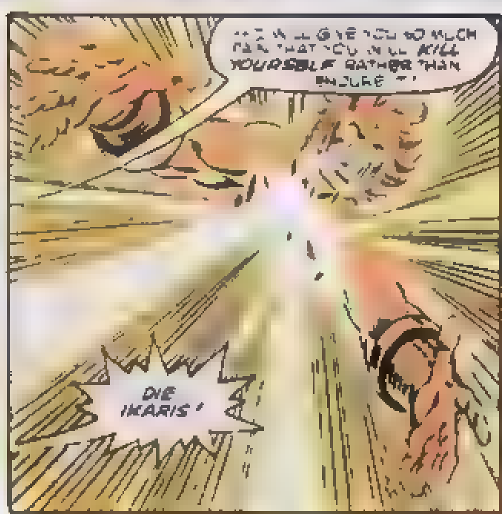
HE WANTS TO FIGHT ... KILL
YOUR ARROGANCE ... TO USE ... DEVICES AGAINST AN ETERNAL
... YOU'VE ... MAY HAVE COMPLETE MENTAL CONTROL OVER YOUR ... STRUCTURE
... HIS ... BACK
BUT YOUR MIND IS STILL THE MIND OF AN ETERNAL ... CHILD OF THE SPACE GODS



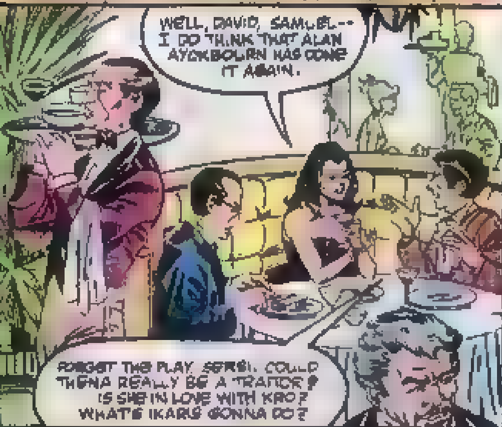
AND AS SUCH CAN STILL FEEL PAIN!
KZAK



YOU KEEP ... YOUR CONTROL-- IT RESTORES YOUR BODY AFTER ANY DAMAGE ... IMMORTAL ... DAMAGE IS IRREPARABLE--
--BUT YOU STILL FEEL! YOU CAN FEEL ENOUGH PAIN THAT IT WILL DRIVE YOU MAD! AND LIKE ... THAT ... LEG OFF--



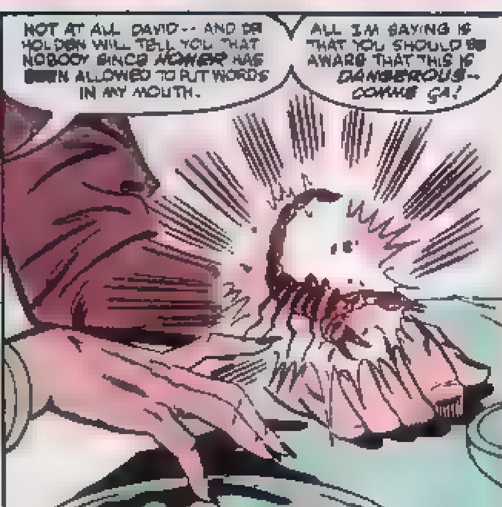
... GIVE YOU SO MUCH ... KILL YOURSELF RATHER THAN ENDURE
DIE IKARIS!

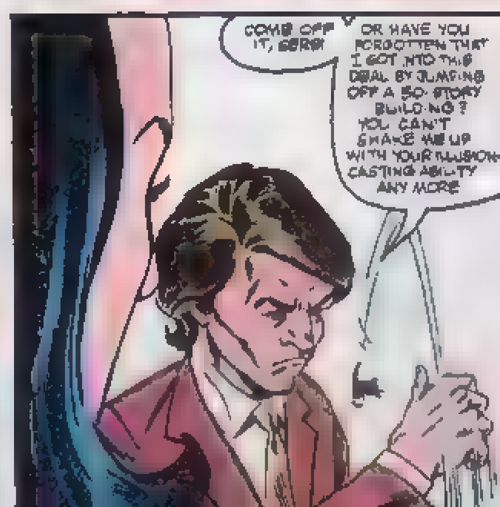

AT THAT MOMENT IN A FASHIONABLE NEW YORK RESTAURANT, TWO MEN-- A PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND A FAILED SUICIDE-- DINE WITH A LADY-- AN ETERNAL WHO ONCE ENTERTAINED A VOYAGER NAMED ODYSSEUS--!
WELL, DAVID, SAMUEL-- I DO THINK THAT ALAN AYCKBOURN HAS DONE IT AGAIN.
FORGET THE PLAY, SERSI. COULD THENA REALLY BE A TRAITOR? IS SHE IN LOVE WITH KRO? WHAT'S IKARIS GONNA DO?


SO THE IN-HOUSE GOSSIP OF OUR LITTLE CREW INTERESTS YOU, DOES IT?
OF COURSE. THIS COULD BE-- IS-- HISTORY! THE FATE OF THE WORLD!


AND YOU THINK THAT DAVE CHATTERTON COULD BE A PART OF IT?
YEAH! I MEAN--

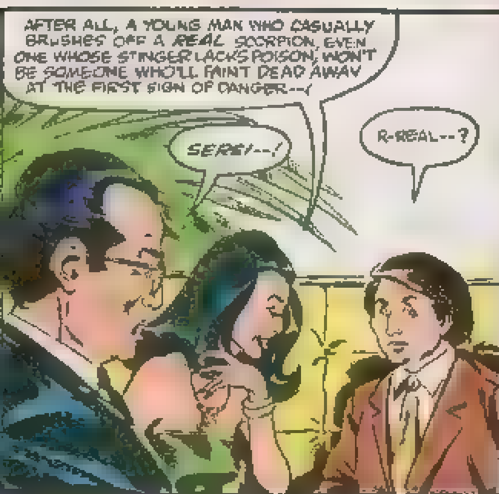

AND YOU'D PLUNGE INTO THIS IN ORDER TO BE FIRST IN LINE ? TO BE IN THE IN-CROWD JUST FOR ONCE?
I MIGHT'VE KNOWN-- THE NEXT WORDS ARE "THERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU MORTALS ARE NOT MEANT TO KNOW-- AND I'M WATCHING ON THE SIDELINES AGAIN.

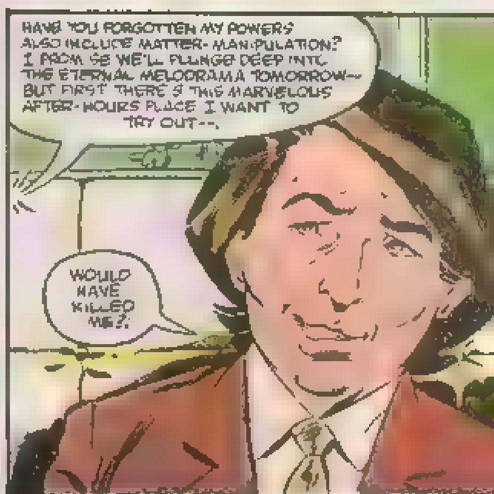

NOT AT ALL DAVID-- AND DR HOLDEN WILL TELL YOU THAT NOBODY SINCE HOMER HAS BEEN ALLOWED TO PUT WORDS IN MY MOUTH.
ALL I'M SAYING IS THAT YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT THIS IS DANGEROUS-- COMME ÇA!

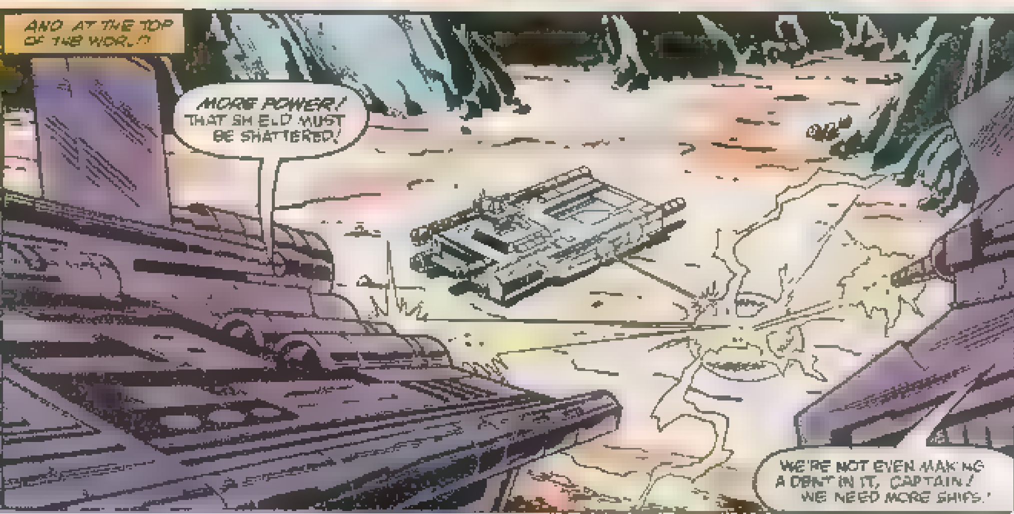

COME OFF IT, SERSI
OR HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THAT I GOT INTO THIS DEAL BY JUMPING OFF A 50-STORY BUILDING? YOU CAN'T SHAKE ME UP WITH YOUR ILLUSION-CASTING ABILITY ANY MORE

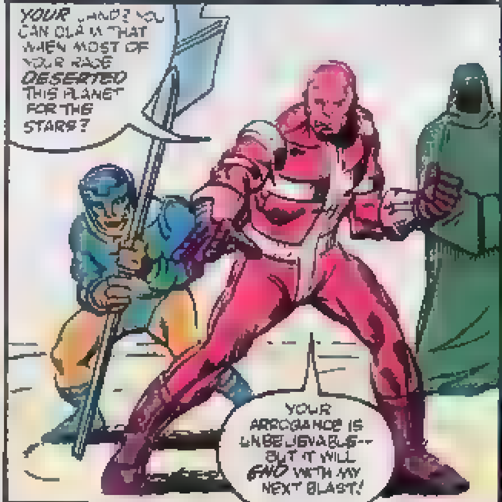
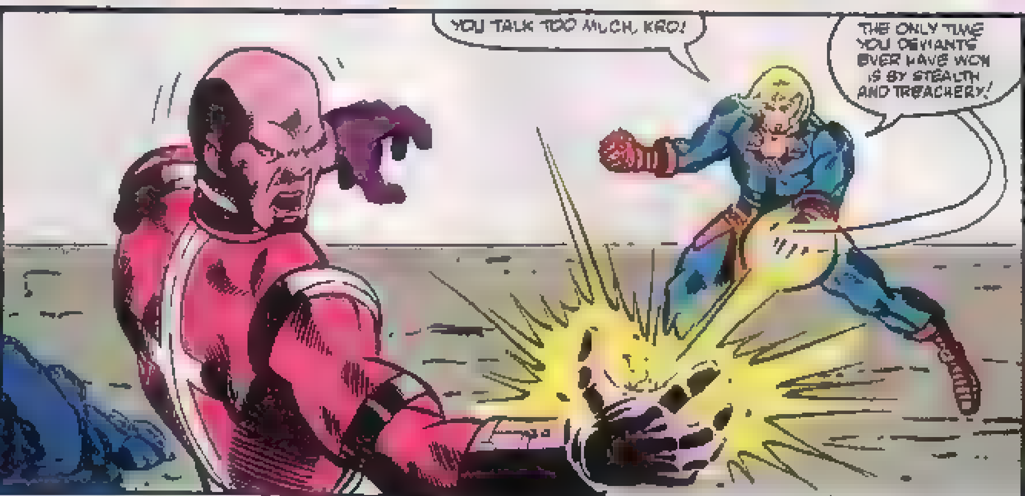
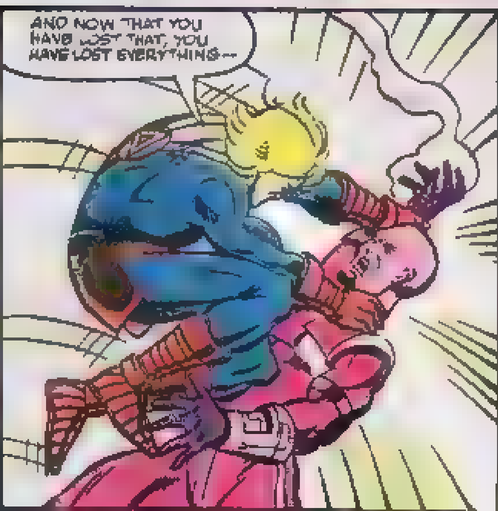
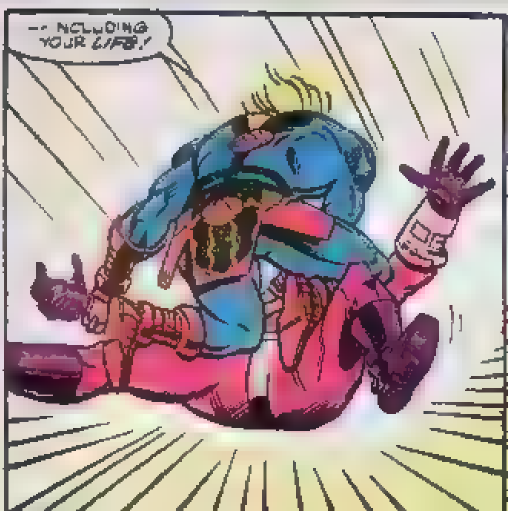

BUT THIS -- THIS IS *LIFE*, SERSI! THIS IS EVERYTHING I'VE BEEN LEFT OUT OF. YOU'VE *GOT* TO LET ME BE IN ON IT!
SAMUEL WILL TELL YOU I'M A SUCKER FOR ORATORY, DAVID.

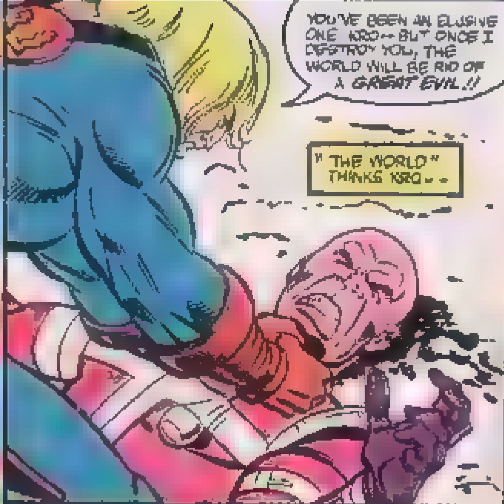

AND AFTER A FEW THOUSAND YEARS OF BEING AROUND YOU HUMANS, I'M AN *IMPECCABLE* JUDGE OF CHARACTER. TO BE HONEST, ALL THESE ETERNAL TEMPESTS IN TEAPOTS BORE ME A BIT
...BUT SEEING THEM THROUGH FRESH EYES MAKES IT COME ALIVE AGAIN. AND YOU'LL DO.


AFTER ALL, A YOUNG MAN WHO CASUALLY BRUSHES OFF A *REAL* SCORPION, EVEN ONE WHOSE STINGER LACKS POISON, WON'T BE SOMEONE WHO'LL FAINT DEAD AWAY AT THE FIRST SIGN OF DANGER--!
SERSI--!
R-REAL--?


HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN MY POWERS ALSO INCLUDE MATTER-MANIPULATION? I PROMISE WE'LL PLUNGE DEEP INTO THE ETERNAL MELODRAMA TOMORROW-- BUT FIRST THERE'S THIS MARVELOUS AFTER-HOURS PLACE I WANT TO TRY OUT--.
WOULD HAVE KILLED ME?!

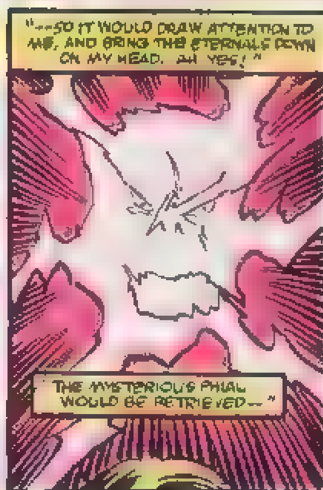

AND AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD
MORE POWER! THAT SHIELD MUST BE SHATTERED!
WE'RE NOT EVEN MAKING A DENT IN IT, CAPTAIN! WE NEED MORE SHIPS!


THE MISTAKE YOU MADE, KRO, IS THINKING YOU COULD FIGHT A POLAR ETERNAL ON HIS HOME GROUND! THIS IS MY LAND YOU'VE DESECRATED-- AND NO AMOUNT OF PAIN WILL MAKE ME FORGET THAT!

YOUR LAND? YOU CAN CLAIM THAT WHEN MOST OF YOUR RACE DESERTED THIS PLANET FOR THE STARS?
YOUR ARROGANCE IS UNBELIEVABLE-- BUT IT WILL END WITH MY NEXT BLAST!

YOU TALK TOO MUCH, KRO!
THE ONLY TIME YOU DEVIANTS EVER HAVE WON IS BY STEALTH AND TREACHERY!

AND NOW THAT YOU HAVE LOST THAT, YOU HAVE LOST EVERYTHING--

--INCLUDING YOUR LIFE!

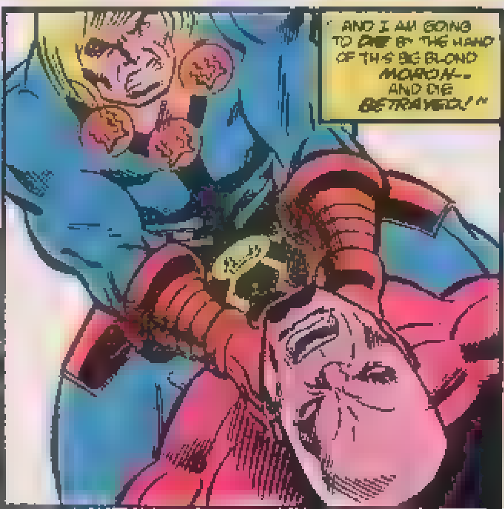

YOU'VE BEEN AN ELUSIVE ONE, KRO-- BUT ONCE I DESTROY YOU, THE WORLD WILL BE RID OF A GREAT EVIL!!
"THE WORLD" THINKS KRO...

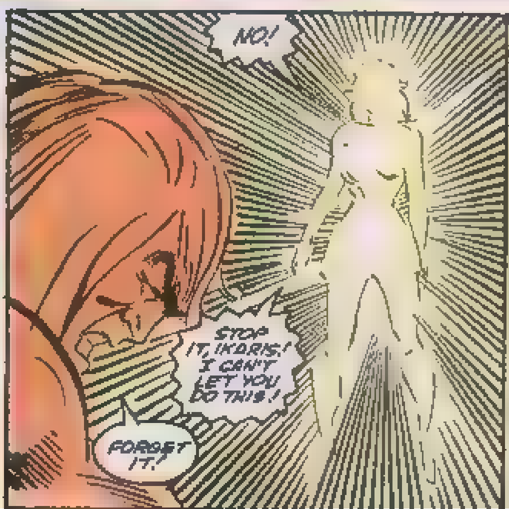

"--THE WORLD WILL BE RID OF A GREAT INCONVENIENCE!"

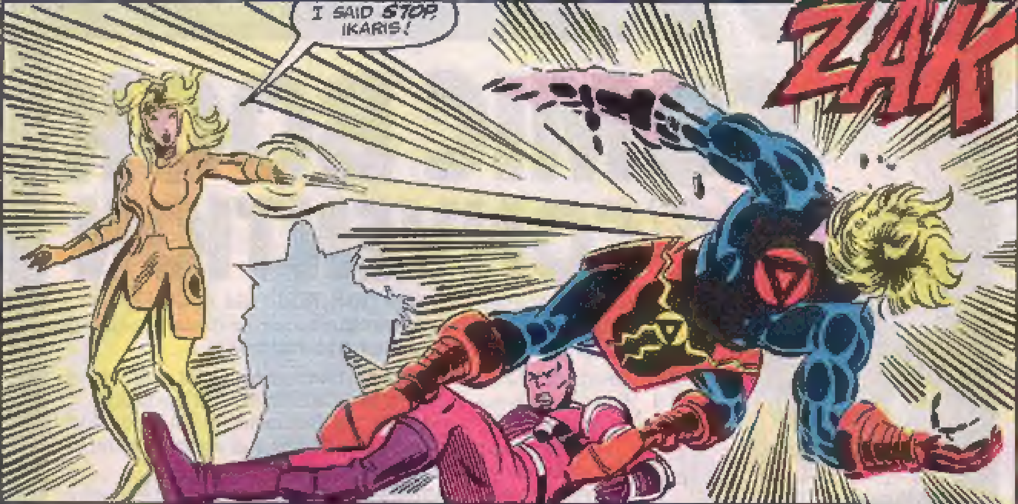

"YES, IT WILL MAKE THINGS VERY NEAT INDEED, WON'T IT?"
"TO SEND ME OUT ON A MYSTERIOUS MISSION WITH FIVE TIMES THE FORCE NECESSARY--"

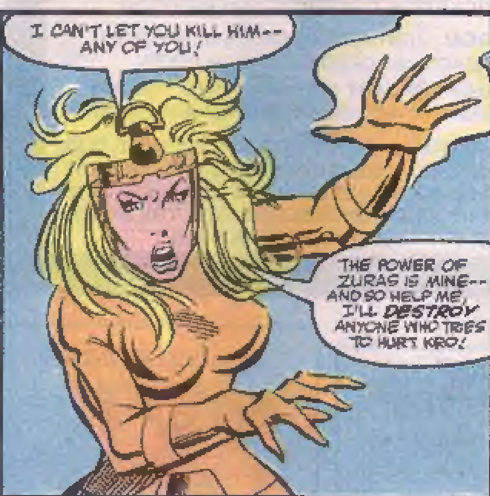

"--SO IT WOULD DRAW ATTENTION TO ME, AND BRING THE ETERNALS DOWN ON MY HEAD. AH YES!"
THE MYSTERIOUS PHIAL WOULD BE RETRIEVED--"


"--BUT KRO THE NUISANCE WOULD BE GROUND INTO DUST!"
"...AND THE PRIESTLORD GHAUR LAUGHS AS THE LAST OPPOSING PIECE IS SWEPT FROM THE BOARD!"

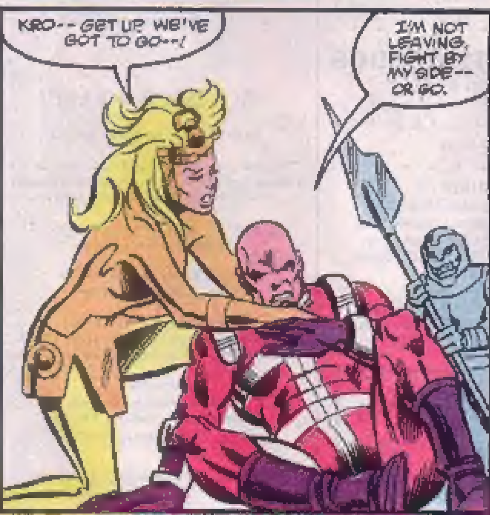

"AND I AM GOING TO DIE BY THE HAND OF THIS BIG BLOND MORON-- AND DIE BETRAYED!"


NO!
STOP IT, IKARIS! I CAN'T LET YOU DO THIS!
FORGET IT!


I SAID STOP, IKARIS!
ZAK

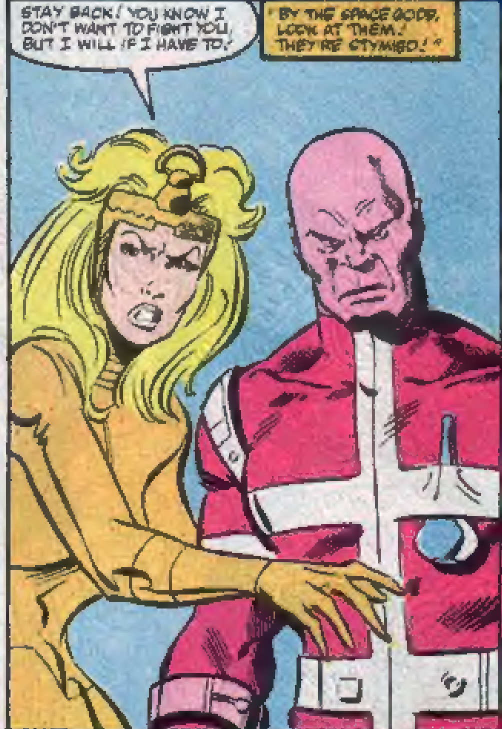

I CAN'T LET YOU KILL HIM-- ANY OF YOU!
THE POWER OF ZURAS IS MINE-- AND SO HELP ME, I'LL DESTROY ANYONE WHO TRIES TO HURT KRO!


A STUNNED SILENCE FALLS... THE WORDS THAT HAVE FALLEN FROM THEIR RULER'S MOUTH-- ARE TREASON.

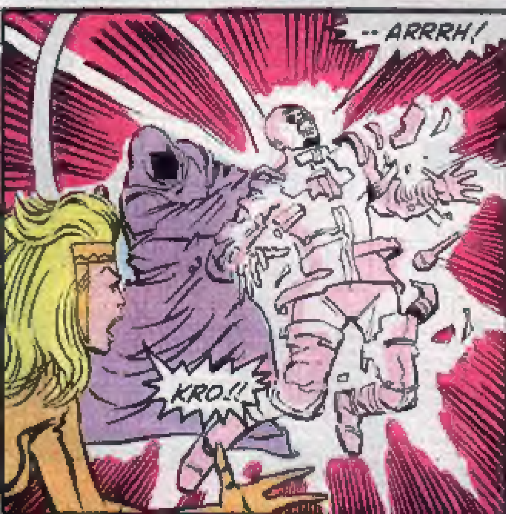

KRO-- GET UP. WE'VE GOT TO GO--!
I'M NOT LEAVING. FIGHT BY MY SIDE-- OR GO.


THE DEVIANT KNOWS, THENA. HERE MUST END THE MARCH OF THE DEVIANTS ONCE AND FOR ALL-- OR HERE MUST END THE BALANCE PRESERVED BY THE ETERNALS. AND YOU MUST DECIDE WHICH TO FIGHT FOR.
YOU'RE CRAZY. I'LL DO NEITHER!


I'M ONLY GOING TO SAY THIS ONCE, THENA -- STAND ASIDE.
PLEASE, THENA -- THIS WAS NEVER MEANT TO BE. DON'T MAKE US FIGHT YOU--!


STAY BACK! YOU KNOW I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT YOU, BUT I WILL IF I HAVE TO!
"BY THE SPACE GODS, LOOK AT THEM! THEY'RE STYMIED!"


OUT OF MY WAY, MAKKARI! THERE'S SCUM HERE THAT NEEDS KILLING!
"WHAT A MOMENT! LOOK AT THEIR AGONY! IT'S ALMOST WORTH IT, JUST FOR THIS ONE MO--"
SHUT UP, REJECT-- AND STAY PUT.

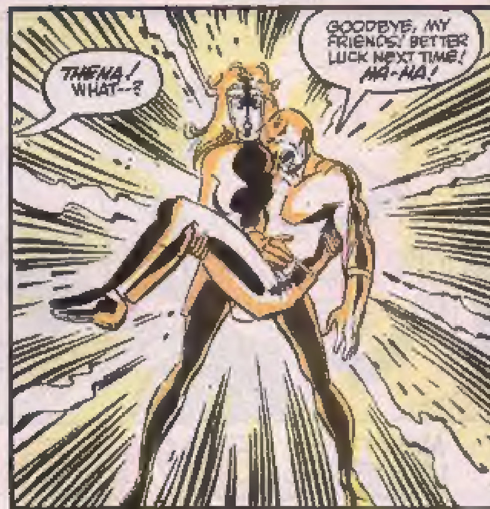

-- ARRRH!
KRO!!

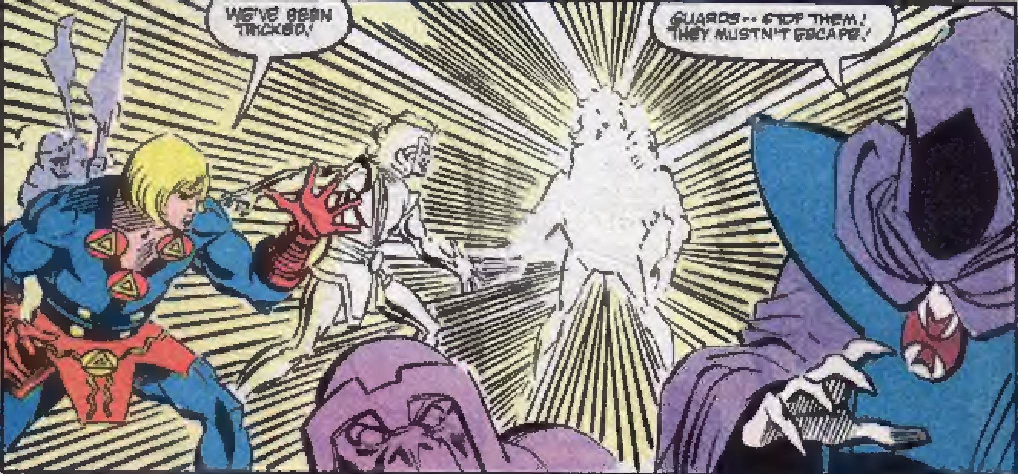

KRO, NO! YOU CAN'T-- YOU MUSTN'T BE DEAD! ZURAS, PLEASE, NO!
HE COULDN'T HAVE SURVIVED A BLOW LIKE THAT, THENA!

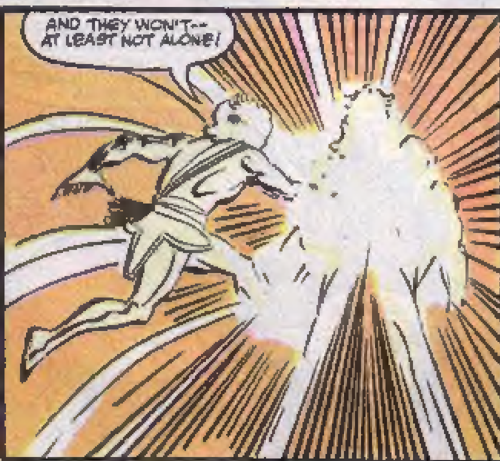

QUICK--PICK UP THE PHIAL WHILE THEY'RE DISTRACTED!
YES-- THE PRIESTS'LL REWARD US MAGNIFICENTLY FOR IT!
NOT DEAD-- NOT DEAD!

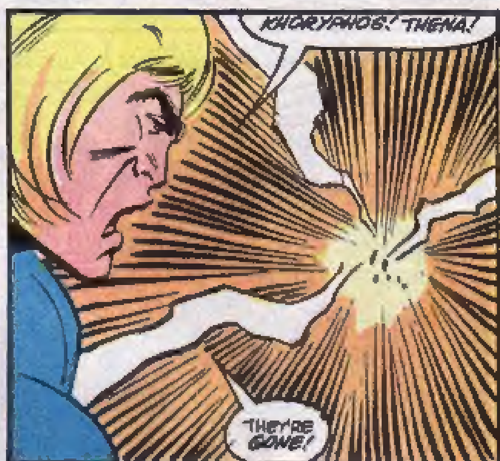
YOU MONSTER! I'LL KILL YOU FOR THIS--I'LL TEAR YOUR--
THENA-- WHOEVER THE BEING WAS THAT DID THIS TO KRO--WHATEVER HE WAS-- HE VANISHED. HE'S GONE.

THENA, I--
DON'T SAY ANYTHING, IKARIS. JUST LEAVE HER BE.
IT'S OVER, ETERNALS. OUR PURPOSE IS FINISHED HERE.
INDEED. BOTH OUR RACES HAVE LOST A RULER TODAY--ONE THROUGH TREASON, THE OTHER THROUGH DEATH. LET BOTH SIDES WITHDRAW.
KRO--KRO, PLEASE DON'T LEAVE ME ALL ALONE--!

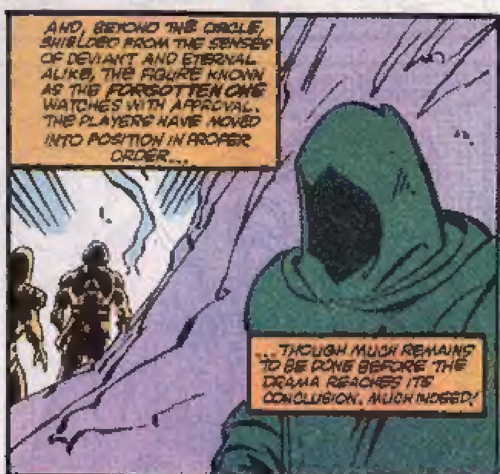
LISTEN TO ME, THENA, AND DO EXACTLY AS I SAY. TELEPORT OUT OF HERE--NOW!
AS YOU LOVE ME, TRUST ME.

THENA! WHAT--?
GOODBYE, MY FRIENDS! BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME! HA-HA!











NEXT ISSUE: **LOVE ON THE RUN!**